

REMARKS

Reconsideration of this application is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Entry of this Amendment is proper under 37 C.F.R. § 1.116 since this Amendment: (a) places the application in condition for allowance for reasons discussed herein; (b) does not raise any new issue regarding further search and/or consideration since the Amendment amplifies issues previously discussed throughout prosecution; (c) does not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally-rejected claims; and (d) places the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The Amendment is necessary because it is made in reply to arguments raised in the rejection. Entry of the Amendment is thus respectfully requested.

As a preliminary matter, the Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of claims 10-14 of this application.

By the foregoing amendment, claims 1 and 15 have been amended. No new matter has been added. Thus, claims 1-18 are pending in this application and subject to examination.

In the Office Action mailed October 5, 2006, claims 10-14 were allowed. Claims 1-9 and 15-18 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. It is noted that claims 1 and 15 have been amended. To the extent the rejections remain applicable to the claims currently pending, the Applicant hereby traverses the rejections, as follows.

Claims 1-9 and 15-18

Regarding the rejection of claims 1-9 and 15-18 under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 15 (and, through dependency, claims 2-9 and 16-18) have been amended responsive to this rejection. The Applicant respectfully submits that the rejection is now moot and that claims 1-9 and 15-18 are in condition for allowance.

Claims 10-14

As indicated in the Office Action, claims 10-14 are allowed.

Conclusion

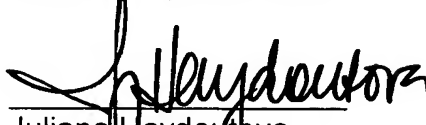
For all of the above reasons, it is respectfully submitted that the claims now pending recite patentable subject matter. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the outstanding rejections and an issuance of a Notice of Allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner determine that any further action is necessary to place this application into better form, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the undersigned representative at the number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants hereby petition for an appropriate extension of time. The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fee deficiency or credit any overpayment associated with

this communication to Deposit Account No. 01-2300, referring to client-matter
number 107337-00056.

Respectfully submitted,


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